



NEWS RELEASE

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Driver Charged with Murder of His Passenger After School Bus Crash

A 20-year-old man has been charged with murder after crashing an alleged stolen car into an empty school bus in Palmdale, killing his passenger, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced today.

Douglas Vernon Fiddament (dob 11/1/94) of Pearblossom faces one count each of murder; receiving stolen property, motor vehicle; possession for sale of methamphetamine and three counts of driving or taking a vehicle without consent.

Case MA065130 includes allegations that during the commission of the crimes Fiddament was out on bail and that he was convicted of taking a vehicle without consent on Sept. 30, 2013.

Arraignment for Fiddament is scheduled today in Department A1 of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, Antelope Valley Branch. The charges were filed on Jan. 16.

The defendant is accused of driving a stolen 1997 Dodge Ram pickup truck with an RV trailer attached on Jan. 13 that crashed into a school bus with no children aboard, prosecutors said. Manuel Lopez, 33, who was a passenger in the truck was killed.

The complaint also includes a felony charge for the taking of a 1995 Jeep Wrangler weeks earlier.

Deputy District Attorney Seza Mikikian will recommend that bail be set at more than \$1 million.

If convicted as charged, Fiddament faces a possible maximum sentence of 21 years to life in state prison.

The case remains under investigation by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Palmdale Station.

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About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to seeking justice for victims of crime and enhancing public safety. Last year, the [Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#) prosecuted more than 71,000 felony defendants and nearly 112,000 misdemeanor defendants.